

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
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INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
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AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUICIGALPA
USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3060

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, PORG, NU, AR, BR
SUBJECT: NICARAGUAN FOREIGN MINISTER ON GREANADA OAS ASSEMBLY

SUMMARY: FORN MIN MONTIEL CHARACTERIZED HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE AT
RECENT OASGA AS SENSATIONALIZED AND POLITICIZED AND STATED THAT
EXCESSIVE ATTENTION GIVEN TO IT HAD WORKED TO DETRIMENT OF OTHER
IMPORTANT ISSUES. MONTIEL ALSO EXPALINED NICARAGUA'S ABSENCE DURING
THE VOTE ON RESOLUTION TAKING NOTE OF IAHC'S REPORT ON CUBA.
END SUMMARY

1. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN MANAGUA ON JUNE 25, NICARAGUAN FOREIGN
MINISTER ALEJANDRO MONTIEL ARGUELLO ANSWERED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE
RECENT ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN GRENADA.
MONTIEL STATED THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE HAD DOMINATED THE PRO-
CEEDINGS AT GRENADA. WHILE HE ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPORTANT OF HUMAN
RIGHTS, MONTIEL SAID THAT THE ISSUE HAD BECOME "TOO SENSATIONALIZED
AND POLITICIZED" AND THE EXCESSIVE ATTENTION GIVEN TO IT HAD WORKED
TO THE DETRIMENT OF OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES SUCH AS THE RESTRUCTURING
OF THE OAS AND THE PROBLEMS OF RAW MATERIALS PRODUCERS. THE FOREIGN
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MINISTER REAFFIRMED NICARAGUA'S COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS BUT
WARNED THAT HUMAN RIGHTS SHOULD NOT BE PROMOTED "WITH A SELECTIVE
CRITERION" AND THAT NO ONE COUNTRY HAS THE RIGHT TO SET ITSELF UP
UNILATERALLY AS A JUDGE OF OTHERS.

2. WITH REGARD TO NICARAGUA'S ABSENCE DURING THE VOTE ON THE
RESOLUTION TAKING NOTE OF THE REPORT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN

RIGHTS COMMISSION ON THE CONDITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CUBA, MONTIEL EXPLAINED THE IAHRC HAS BEEN REPORTING ON CUBA FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS WITHOUT ACCOMPLISHING THE LIBERATION OF A SINGLE CUBAN PRISONER, AND THAT THE REPETITION OF SUCH A USELESS EXERCISE DETRACTED FROM THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE IAHRC AND THE OAD. FOR THAT REASON, HE SAID, NICARAGUA HAD DECIDED NOT TO VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION. HE ADDED THAT NICARAGUA HAD DECIDED NOT TO BE PRESENT RATHER THAN TO ABSTAIN BECAUSE IT DID NOT WANT TO TAKE THE SAME POSITION AS COUNTRIES THAT SUPPORTED THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT.

COMMENT: NICARAGUA'S CURIOUS POSITION ON THE IAHRC'S REPORT ON CUBA SUGGESTS AN INTENTION TO INDIRECTLY CRITICIZE THE IAHRC AND AVOID GIVING ANY SUPPORT TO THOSE GOVERNMENTS WHICH WISH TO SEE IT STRENGTHENED. EVEN SO, THE NICARAGUAN DELEGATION COULD NOT STOMACH ASSOCIATION WITH PRO-CUBAN GOVERNMENTS ON THIS ISSUE, AND SO IT STAYED AWAY.

3. MONTIEL'S PRESS CONFERENCE WAS THE SUBJECT OF A COLUMN BY RIGHT-WING JOURNALIST LUIS MANUEL MARTINEZ IN THE SOMOZA FAMILY NEWSPAPER NOVEDADES ON JUNE 27. MARTINEZ ATTACHED WHAT HE CALLED THE "OBSOLETE TERMINOLOGY OF 1948, EMBODIED IN THE INSUBSTANTIAL CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS APPROVED BY THE UNITED NATIONS, WITHOUT TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THOSE ELEMENTS THAT ENDANGER THE LIVES OF CITIZENS, PROPERTY, AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY (I.E., TERRORISTS)." MARTINEZ CONCLUDED BY PRAISING ARGENTIAN AND BRAZIL FOR DEMONSTRATING, IN HIS VIEW, THAT "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND THE INTERNAL POLICIES

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OF EACH OF OUR COUNTRIES ARE NOT DEFINED BY THE PATHS TRACED BY THE WHITE HOUSE."

COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MARTINEZ'S USUALLY EXTREME VIEWS DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE GON, ON THIS ISSUE HIS VIEW MIGHT REFLECT THE THINKING OF SOME ELEMENTS IN THE GON WHO ARE CURRENTLY ANTI-U.S. BECAUSE OF THE U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVE.

RUBENSTEIN

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